

Key Points of Effective Intervention in Reading

By Angela Flavin | Categories: Reading Intervention and Acceleration, Reading

One morning, I pulled a group of students into my intervention room to administer a progress-monitoring assessment. They knew what was happening, and most were excited to show off their reading skills. One little boy, however, seemed nervous as I called him over to have him read for me. He had just been placed in my group two weeks prior because he was not moving at the same pace as the other members of his group and needed some reteaching of certain sound patterns before he could move on to learning new ones. He struggled with reading words that contained r-controlled vowels. By utilizing some alternate word lists integrated within a highly effective and systematic intervention program, I was able to provide the practice he needed to achieve mastery of those words on the progress-monitoring assessment. That day, despite his initial nervousness, he read with confidence and pride because he recognized that additional practice had helped him. No more did he confuse perk for park or stir for star!

A classroom curriculum designed to teach and inspire young students as readers must be research-based. After implementing such a program and carefully monitoring students' acquisition of the taught skills, perceptive teachers may notice a small group of students who are not making appropriate gains when compared with their grade-level peers. At this pivotal point in their academic career, it is important that these students receive strategic academic interventions early on. A high-quality early intervention administered by a knowledgeable educator can change a student's developmental trajectory and greatly improve their academic outcomes.



The appropriate intervention plan for each student will address the intensity, frequency, and duration of the intervention. The plan should be informed by teacher and parent input, data from screening tools, and the utilization of a problem-solving approach that narrows the focus so that the interventions are strategic. To maximize student gains, the intervention must be research-based and scientifically validated. In addition to daily anecdotal notes and teacher observations, a progress-monitoring tool is highly valuable in measuring the effectiveness of the intervention for a particular child. The progress-monitoring tool should be easy to administer and should provide a clear picture of how the student is performing on the skill set that has recently been taught.

Progress-monitoring data should support instructional decision-making about whether to move ahead in the lessons or reteach needed concepts and skills. Ideally, the intervention program provides additional resources and activities that match the skills taught in the whole class while offering a different way of accessing and retaining them.

Key aspects of a successful intervention program include explicit instruction and immediate feedback. A set routine provides structure for the students and allows them to anticipate the activities that each group session will hold. Immediate, direct feedback when errors are made prevents students from practicing mistakes. This error correction creates yet another routine for the student to anticipate, while also providing a direct message on their progress towards achieving mastery of a skill set.

What do you consider when determining effective intervention instruction so that you can experience a student reading with confidence and no longer confusing *perk* for *park* or *stir* for *star*?